

Message Text

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62

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSC-10 PA-04

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OMB-01 AID-20 IO-14 DRC-01 /164 W
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FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 178

INFO AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

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SUBJ: ARRIVAL PRESS CONFERENCE BY CHILEAN FONMIN HUERTA AND
REMARKS BY MEXICAN FONSEC TO CHILEAN CORRESPONDENTS

1. SUMMARY: CHILEAN FONMIN RECEIVED HEAVIEST COVERAGE OF ANY LATIN FONMIN THUS FAR ON ARRIVAL FOR MFM. IN PRESS CONFERENCE HE SAID CHILE, AFTER ITS OWN RECENT EXPERIENCE, WOULD VIEW WITH CONCERN SOVIET PENETRATION OF ANY LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRY; DENIED THAT CHILE AND BRAZIL WERE FORMING AN "AXIS" FRIENDLY TO US PRIVATE INTERESTS; AND DISPUTED CASUALTY COUNTS IN PERIOD SINCE ALLENDE WAS OVERTHROWN. MEXICAN FONSEC TOLD CHILEAN CORRESPONDENTS THAT CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT IN SANTIAGO HAD "INDISPUTABLY" CREATED "SPECIAL SITUATION" BETWEEN MEXICO AND CHILE, ALTHOUGH BROTHERHOOD HAD ALWAYS EXISTED BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES, AND DENIED THAT GOM HAD SOUGHT TO TURN MEXICAN PRESS AND PUBLIC OPINION AGAINST CHILEAN JUNTA. END SUMMARY.

2. VICE ADM. ISMAEL HUERTA DIAZ, CHILEAN FOREIGN MINISTER, HELD EXTENSIVE PRESS CONFERENCE AT MEXICO CITY AIRPORT ON ARRIVAL FEBRUARY 17. SEVERAL PAPERS DEVOTE SEPARATE ARTICLES TO HUERTA'S REMARKS, WHILE LUMPING THOSE OF MOST
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OTHER LATIN FONMINS INTO OMNIBUS STORIES (SIMILARLY,

SEVERAL PAPERS HAVE NOTED THAT HUERTA AND SECRETARY KISSINGER WILL BE PROVIDED HEAVIER SECURITY THAN OTHER MFM PARTICIPANTS. ONE PAPER ALSO SAYS THAT HUERTA ARRIVED ON AN EASTERN FLIGHT FROM NEW ORLEANS RATHER THAN ON PANAM FROM MIAMI AS ANNOUNCED; THUS RABASA MET HIM ONLY BY CHANGE IN AIRPORT CUSTOMS AREA.)

3. AFTER LONG EXPOSITION OF BASES OF CURRENT CHILEAN FOREIGN POLICY, HUERTA SAID IN REPLY TO QUESTION THAT IT IS "A LIE" THAT CHILE AND BRAZIL HAVE FORMED "AN AXIS" SYMPATHETIC TO PRIVATE US INTERESTS; "WE CHILEAN WANT TO GO IN THE SAME DIRECTION AS DO THE INTERESTS OF ALL OF LATIN AMERICA."

4. HE ADDED: "WE CHILEANS WOULD VIEW WITH CONCERN ANY SOVIET PENETRATION THAT MIGHT EXIST IN WHATEVER LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRY, BECAUSE WE ARE ONLY NOW EMERGING FROM A VERY SAD EXPERIENCE, WHICH FORTUNATELY WE HAVE OVERCOME."

5. ASKED BY CUBAN CORRESPONDENT ABOUT ALLEGATIONS OF FORMER SWEDISH AMBASSADOR TO CHILE HARALD EDELSTAM THAT MILITARY COUP HAD RESULTED IN DEATHS OF 15,000 CHILEANS, HUERTA REPLIED: "THE FORMER SWEDISH AMBASSADOR HAS BECOME KNOWN FOR HIS CONTINUAL DISTORTIONS, AND IT SURPRISES ME THAT WHILE IN MEXICO HE SAID '15,000', FOR HE HAS SAID ELSEWHERE THAT THERE WERE 80,000 DEAD. SUCH FIGURES ARE ABSOLUTE DISTORTIONS. WE AREN'T GOING TO DENY THERE HAVE BEEN VICTIMS, BUT CONSIDERING THE GRAVITY OF THE DANGER WE LIVED THROUGH AND WHAT COULD HAVE HAPPENED...WE BELIEVE THAT THE ACTUAL NUMBER --WHICH IS SUBSTANTIALLY LESS THAN ONE THOUSAND--IS EXTREMELY SMALL...."

6. HUERTA ALSO SAID CHILEAN ARMY COULD AGREE WITH PROPOSAL BY PERUVIAN PRESIDENT VELASCO ALVARADO FOR A TEN-YEAR FREEZE ON ACQUISITION OF WEAPONRY BY LATIN COUNTRIES, ALTHOUGH HUERTA STRESSED THAT, SO FAR AS HE UNDERSTOOD, PERUVIAN PROPOSAL WAS STILL UNOFFICIAL.

7. HUERTA CONCLUDED BY EXPRESSING HOPE THAT US AND LATIN INTERESTS WERE COMPATIBLE AND THAT MFM WOULD PRODUCE

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POSITIVE RESULTS. HE SAID CHILE ATTACHED PARTICULAR IMPORTANCE TO "TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY" ITEM ON AGENDA BUT DECLINED TO DISCLOSE CHILEAN POSITION IN ADVANCE.

8. MEXICAN FONSEC RABASA, BUTTONHOLED BY MEXICAN, CHILEAN AND OTHER FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS AT AIRPORT, WAS ASKED WHETHER CHILEAN CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT MEANT NEW TYPE OF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. HE ANSWERED THAT

QUESTIONER'S PHRASE "NEW RELATIONS" IMPLIED ACCEPTANCE OF A "SEPCIAL SITUATION" AND SAID IT WAS INDISPUTABLE THAT CHILEAN CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT HAD CREATED SUCH A SITUATION FOR MEXICO. IT IS ALSO INDISPUTABLE, HOWEVER, THAT "BROTHERHOOD" HAS ALWAYS EXISTED BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES AND CONTINUES TO EXIST; "ENMITY HAS NEVER EXISTED, NOR DOES IT NOW." PRESSED BY CHILEAN CORRESPONDENTS TO BE MORE EXPLICIT, RABASA DENIED THAT GOM HAD TRIED TO DIRECT A PRESS CAMPAIGN AGAINST CHILEAN JUNTA OR ORIENT MEXICAN PUBLIC OPINION IN THAT DIRECTION.

9. CLIPPINGS REPORTING HUERTA AND RABASA REMARKS BEING POUCHED DEPT. AND SANTIAGO.

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